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SUBJECT: EMBASSY LUANDA DESTROYS "MILLIONTH WEAPON"

REF: STATE 93110

¶1. (U) Summary: Angolan police, government officials, military and representatives from the diplomatic and NGO communities applauded as Embassy Luanda,s Charge d, Affaires and an Angolan Armed Forces General destroyed the symbolic "Millionth Weapon" during Embassy Luanda,s commemoration of International Small Arms Destruction Day on July 9th, 2007. The event focused on progress made in the destruction of Angola's excess weapons through the partnership between the USG, international NGOs and the Angolan government. USG-supported weapon destruction teams, in a grant managed by the British NGO HALO Trust, have destroyed 327 tons of small arms and 281 tons of unexploded ordnance since work began in 2005. The event was well-covered in print and by radio and television media. End Summary.

¶2. (U) With representatives from the Angolan police, government, military, the diplomatic and NGO communities on hand, Embassy Luanda destroyed the symbolic "Millionth Weapon" during the "Millionth Weapon Destruction" event on July 9th, 2007. Our NGO implementing partner, UK-based HALO Trust walked attendees through its weapons destruction process, explaining the equipment, safety and accountability procedures. Charge Francisco Fernandez focused on the progress made in the destruction of Angola,s excess weapons through the partnership between the USG, international NGOs and the Angolan government. The Charge , military and police representatives, and the Dutch Ambassador to Luanda joined forces to destroy several weapons which had been secured from police stockpiles for destruction. Note: The Dutch and British governments also support HALO Trust in its small arms destruction program in Angola. End note.

¶3. (U) Embassy Luanda,s press release was covered on national radio, television and print press prior to the event and the ceremony was attended by all major news outlets in the country. The ceremony also received ample coverage on television and radio outlets, and both Portuguese and English language web-based news services carried the story. Members of various press outlets interviewed embassy, government, and HALO representatives about weapons destruction programs in Angola.

¶4. (U) Embassy Luanda extends its thanks to the PM and WRA teams, in particular Dustin Cho and John Stevens, for their planning, financial, and public relations support of this event. Pictures and an article of the event will be available on the Embassy Luanda website at <http://luanda.usembassy.gov>.

FERNANDEZ